GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EARTH SCIENCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2679
ANSWERED ON:31.08.2007
SHRINKING OF GANGOTRI GLACIER
Singh Shri Mohan

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gangotri glacier in the Himalayas is Shrinking by 120 feet every year;

(b) if so, whether the scientists have observed that it will disappear completely; and

(c) if so, the likely effects of disappearance of this glacier?

Answer

MINISTER OF HE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) Not at this rate Sir. Geological Survey of India (GSI) has been conducting studies on the recession of the Gangotri glacier since 1935 or so and this glacier is one of the best documented glaciers for its recession in Indian Himalayas. The rate of shrinking of 30.2 km-long Gangotri Glacier in the last three decades has been found to be more than the rate during the earlier decades. The average rate of recession has been computed by comparing the snout position on 1985 topo sheet map and the 2001 satellite imagery and the result shows that average recession for this period is about 25 meter/year (83 feet/year).

(b) By taking the above rate of shrinking or retreat of the Gangotri glacier in to consideration, no imminent danger exists, as of now.

(c) Does not arise as the Gangotri glacier shall continues to feed the Bhagirati river system as ever before.